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Communications.

Report of an Accidental Case of Poisoning by Aconite.

By F. MCGRATH, M. D.,
of Pittsburgh, Pa.

From its comparatively rare occurrence, I am induced to report the following case of poisoning which has come under my notice.

Mr. P——n, a gentleman aged about 50, had been for two years past an invalid, suffering from a complication of diseases brought on by cold and neuralgia. While in pursuit of his business on the Ohio river, the most intolerable of his maladies, and of course that most complained of, was hemiergia. He had sought the aid of several physicians with more or less advantage, but without permanent benefit. Latterly he was using internally a tonic with some apparent, or at least fancied improvement, prepared in such form that for convenience a teaspoonful formed the dose, which he took three times daily in infusion of taraxacum. Other remedies were prescribed, among which was the tincture of aconitum napellus for application externally to the parts affected with neuralgia. He had been under this treatment but a short time when the accident occurred which terminated his sufferings on Wednesday, the 14th inst. At noon he told his son, a lad of some 14 years, to give him his medicine. The boy unfortunately took up the vial containing the aconite, and thoughtlessly filling a teaspoon, mixed it with the infusion, and handed it to his father, who drank it off; but no sooner was it swallowed than he perceived from the acrid ting-

ling sensation on the mouth and fauces that a terrible mistake had been made; he immediately took largely of salt water, ipecacuanha, &c, to excite vomiting, and sent to inform me of his condition. I saw him soon after; he had vomited freely, but was in great distress from pain in the epigastric region and the burning tingling sensation in his throat, with general numbness and feeling of cold; the expression of countenance was little altered, for he had long been a martyr to pain; the pulse was quick and thready, extremities very cold, the nails blue; he still vomited violently, and had several alvine discharges; he was perfectly conscious; said he was dying. His restlessness was so extreme as seriously to interfere with our efforts to restore warmth. The vomiting had now fairly exhausted him; I was anxious to get in some warm stimulants, but the power of deglutition soon began to fail, and he seemed unwilling to make the effort. I, however, got in some brandy in almond emulsion and succeeded in restoring heat of surface by frictions and such other means as occurred to me at the moment; I felt gratified at the apparent improvement in his state, and began to entertain a hope of saving life, when suddenly my attention was attracted to the state of his eyes; they were turned strongly upward; he had then, though lying in an easy recumbent position, fainted; the heart had ceased to act; a few faint efforts to breathe and all was over. Paralysis of the heart had supervened; at the request of one of his former medical attendants a post mortem examination was permitted, which, though it revealed nothing as regards any effects of the poison, yet an amount of chronic disease of the heart, liver, stomach and kidneys was found, more

than sufficient to account for his protracted sufferings, and the failure of medicine in his case to afford more than mere temporary relief. In this instance a teaspoonful of the tincture of aconite almost immediately ejected from the stomach by vomiting, destroyed life in three hours. I cannot help thinking, however, that in his diseased and debilitated condition a much smaller dose would have proved equally fatal.

On the Extract of Hemlock (*Conium Maculatum*) in the Treatment of Gonorrhœa.

By A. H. STEPHENS, M. D.,
Of Camden, Ohio.

I am induced to give to the public, through your columns, my experience in the use of that very old remedy—hemlock, in the treatment of that very unpopular (in this locality at least) disease, gonorrhœa! Hoping that some of those, more *favorably* located, more familiar with the disease, and, of course, better qualified than myself, may be led to investigate and report the result of such investigation, that the profession at large may become better acquainted with the therapeutic properties of this very important remedy.

Case 1. B—, aged 27. Of sanguineous temperament. Applied Feb. 2d, three days after a suspicious intercourse. Complains of burning and pain in micturition; some tenderness of testicles. Running the finger along the urethra, from perineum to the glans of the penis, I forced out about half a teaspoonful of thick yellow pus, characteristic of gonorrhœa. Directed

R. *Potassæ bitart.* 3*ii.*

Potassæ nit. 3*ss.*

Aut. et pot. tart. gr. *ii.* M.

Sig. Take a teaspoonful 3 times a day. Use *argent. nit.* gr. *ii*; *aquaæ*, f*3i*, as a wash for the urethra.

The medicine produced free purging, considerable nausea, and in four days reduced somewhat the acute symptoms, changing the discharge to a thin transparent fluid, moderating the pain and frequency of micturition. He was then placed on the usual "teaspoonful three times a day" of *copaiba emulsion*, which

he used for ten days, without any amelioration of his "troubles," save a thickening-up of the discharge to about what it was at the commencement of the disease. At this time my attention was called to a communication of Dr. Staats, of Albany, recommending the hemlock, and I determined to test it in this case. He accordingly took ext. *conii*, 3*ii*, divided into twenty pills—two every two hours, discontinuing the local wash of *nit. argent.* In forty-eight hours the discharge diminished one-half; but the giddiness and distress complained of, induced me to reduce the dose one-half, which he continued taking for two days more, when the discharge ceased, and the urethra appeared perfectly clear of inflammation. And now, three weeks after discontinuing the medicine, he says he has no trouble whatever, and is perfectly well.

Case 2. H—, aged 40. Applied three weeks ago. A case of ordinary gonorrhœa. Had been using for a week previous to applying, *copaiba* and *cubeb*, with injections of *zinc* and *morpbia*, without any benefit. I placed him at once on the use of gr. *xii.* ext. of *conii* every two hours, discontinuing all other medicines. In three days the discharge diminished materially, and in five days the man reported himself entirely well.

Case 3. Was a case of rather more than an ordinary amount of inflammatory symptoms. After a free purging with calomel and comp. *powd. jalap*, he was given the ext. *conii*, in the usual dose of gr. *xii* every two hours. The discharge diminished gradually from the first day until the sixth, when the patient was perfectly cured.

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Lamarck, the celebrated *Naturalist*, whose doctrines of progressive development were once popular, remarked, in illustration, that "the efforts of some short-necked bird to catch fish without wetting himself have, with time and perseverance, given rise to all our herons and long-necked waders."

He might have argued, with similar reasoning that the efforts of the same bird to keep its tail from getting wet while wading, had stretched its legs, and hence, with time and perseverance, have been produced all our long-legged waders!

Dr. Langer and the Scott County (Iowa) Medical Society.

To the Editors of the Medical and Surgical Reporter.

Your journal of Feb. 25th, contains an article entitled "External Manipulation of the Fœtus in Utero, to rectify supposed mal-positions—Vindication of the Scott County (Iowa) Medical Society, in expelling a member for alleged unprofessional conduct." (Official.)

I desire the use of your columns to notice the article thus headed. And, as the discussion is beginning to take a wide range, it may be well to look at some facts, bearing directly upon the controversy, between the Scott County Medical Society and Dr. Langer.

The first point to be noticed is, that a practice has been introduced and recommended to the medical profession, not only by various well known Continental medical authorities; but also approved and taught by British and American lecturers on obstetrics—by which, to rectify certain mal-positions of the fœtus in utero, by external manipulations. By some this operation is advised in the later months of pregnancy; by others, not till the patient is actually seized with the pains of labor. A single authority will suffice to prove this: (Caseaux, *Accouchemens*, Paris, 1853, p. 839, and the following.) This author recommends the practice during the last months of pregnancy, as well as during actual labor. I quote his language: "External manipulations wisely directed are often sufficient to rectify such mal-positions."

No fiat of any County Medical Society can annul the fact that the employment of external manipulations, *even in the last months of pregnancy*, has been recommended by eminent medical authorities. It matters not, that such practice has been opposed (if it has) by authorities equally or still more distinguished. It matters not that the Scott County Medical Society, while announcing to the medical public that they have "never denied the possibility or propriety of turning by external manipulation *at the time of labor*," does stigmatise the practice "as unnecessary and dangerous, and highly immoral and disgusting."

Dr. Langer, the subject of the Scott County

Medical Society's discipline, is a Hungarian physician, who has been in this country for several years; a portion of the time engaged in the active practice of his profession. I have before me, while I write, properly authenticated copies of his diplomas, from the University of Vienna, as a physician, surgeon and obstetrician. I have also the certificates of his having served as a surgeon-in-chief of a division of the Hungarian army, during the brief period of the revolution; and in which "his courage, his energy, his skill and experience" are specially commended.

His appointment and professional rank in that army were the result of his previous professional success in private practice. When it is added, that he was for some time connected with the lying-in-hospital of Vienna, where the number of patients annually treated is reckoned by thousands, it can hardly be doubted that he is a well educated and competent medical man.

Since his residence in Iowa, he has been one of the censors of the State Medical Society, and also, I believe, an honorary member of the St. Louis Medical Society. He was last year an accredited delegate to the American Medical Association. That body having listened to a brief paper of his, upon the administration of remedies by sub-cutaneous injections, he was appointed chairman of a committee to prepare a report upon the subject, to be read at the next annual meeting at New Haven. Thus much for Dr. Langer's professional standing and reputation. I will now add a brief statement of the circumstances of the particular case, which led to his expulsion from the Scott County Medical Society.

In April, 1859, he was called to attend a lady, who supposed herself in labor, at the end of the usual period of pregnancy. I quote the language of the lady herself, in a letter addressed to Dr. Langer, and since published in the *New York Medical Press*, Jan. 28th.

"I sent my husband to give you notice, that *I was in labor*. After an examination, you informed me and my husband, of the mal-position of the fœtus; which explained to me the different feelings, this time, from the former four pregnancies. At the same time you asked leave to try and correct the

mal-position, by external manipulation, to which consent was readily given. I felt a change and observed a difference in the shape of the abdomen, and relief from the false labor-pains, after these manipulations. You succeeded in correcting the mal-position, to my satisfaction, and the well-doing of the child. You behaved properly and gentlemanly," &c.

The above statement the lady has verified under oath, and with these additional facts: That she never had any conversation with Dr. Langer, till she sent for him, when she supposed herself in labor. That she sent for him, at three different times, with this same impression; That he had never made any examinations, except when thus summoned; That he did not alarm her by his language or conduct; That owing to the fact that he had a lame finger, he did, at the third visit, request permission to call counsel, to assist in any necessity that might arise for further interference, in the progress of the labor; That, owing to her objections to the three different physicians of Davenport, whose names were suggested by Dr. L., Dr. Gregg, of Rock Island, was finally summoned. Several hours after this visit of Dr. Langer, when the consultation was decided upon, Dr. Gregg called in company with him. The lady was then up and about the house. On the arrival of the physicians, Dr. Langer again made an examination, after which, he requested Dr. Gregg also to make an examination, *per vaginam*, saying, at the same time, that "he thought he had rectified the mal-presentation."

Dr. Gregg did as he was requested, found the mouth of the womb not open, and then assured the lady and her husband that "all was right," and both gentlemen left; the one to return to Rock Island, and the other to await a re-summons to the bed-side of his patient. This took place within forty-eight hours, when the lady was safely delivered.

Dr. Gregg though, it seems, not satisfied with the conduct of the case, on meeting a relative of the lady, in reply to an inquiry, very kindly and civilly said, that "she was doing well, and that she was in good hands."

Now taking the sworn statement of the lady and her husband, it will be seen that the case was precisely such an one as was best suited

for the operation of "cephalic version, by external manipulation," a method though not common in this country, yet taught by the medical instructors of Dr. Langer in Vienna, and sanctioned by various authors in his library.

But the case, as a question of medical ethics, is not materially altered, if we suppose that the lady was mistaken, in some respects. It was at the end of the usual period of pregnancy, and she sends for Dr. Langer, in consequence of what proved to be false labor-pains; relating to him, that she had experienced unusual feelings, and noticed a difference in the shape of her abdomen.

As it has been remarked by an American authority (Dr. Elliot) that "this practice demands an accurate knowledge of the various positions of the foetus in utero, and a habit of appreciating its various parts through the abdominal walls"—in short, very nice discrimination, it would be no serious disparagement of Dr. Langer's professional skill (and for that matter Dr. Gregg's, also) if we also suppose, that he too was mistaken, as to the nature of the presentation, or the case generally. The fact that Dr. Langer, himself, for a reason already mentioned, requested that another physician should be called in (and this is sworn to by the parties) is conclusive evidence that he acted in entire good faith toward his patient, and that he regarded it as a sound practice.

Other facts are equally conclusive upon this point. Dr. Langer's accusers do not presume to disparage his general professional skill or reputation. Nor is it alleged, that he has in any instance, beside this one, applied the obnoxious practice. For though he is in general obstetrical practice, he has had no occasion for its employment. If he had adopted it as an empiricism, to acquire notoriety, would the Society have been limited to a single count in their first indictment? That he was not prompted to apply external manipulations in this particular instance, by any morbid and lustful propensities, is equally evident from the sworn statement of the lady and her husband, from which I have already quoted.

Some three months after this case occurred,

Dr. Langer was arraigned before the Scott County Medical Society, by two of its members, through the representations of Dr. Gregg.

Copy of Charges against Dr. I. Langer, before Scott County Medical Society.

Whereas, among other objects, this society has been organized for the establishment of and maintenance of the dignity and honor of the profession, and for the suppression of quackery in all its forms; and whereas, by its rules and regulations an impeachment will hold against any member who may violate the code of ethics, or by his practices may disregard and infringe upon the general high standard of character and moral excellence required by that code;

Therefore, we, the undersigned, present the following charges against a member of this body, Dr. Ignatius Langer:

That he has violated the general spirit of the code, by his practice in a case of pregnancy which occurred in this place, and in which, for several days prior to the day of confinement, he made certain unwarrantable examinations and manipulations, with the pretended object of correcting the presentation of a fetus in *ntero*, deceiving the patient, by informing her that the child had an unnatural position, and that it became necessary to change it, a practice purely deceptive—an impossibility, in fact, and in its details highly indelicate and dishonorable.

(Signed) E. S. BARROWS,
 J. M. WITHERWAX.

This charge was presented by Dr. Barrows at the morning session, on the 26th of July, 1859.

J. M. ADLER, Sec'y.

Dr. L. at once defended his practice, affirming that it was sustained by numerous authorities, which he would present, with the society's permission, at the afternoon session. His accusers were evidently taken by surprise. This practice, which, in their ignorance, they had regarded as an empiricism of the Doctor's own invention—otherwise no action could fairly be sustained for unprofessional conduct—was, after all, sanctioned by competent authorities. To meet this new aspect of the case, at the afternoon session a second and supplementary series of charges were introduced, viz.:

"Also, that in his general intercourse with the public, he is boastful of cures which he professes to have made; vaunting continually his own superior skill, thrusting and forcing himself into families, by

voluntary advice, by which practice he continually violates the cardinal rules of that code of ethics by which our intercourse one with another, and with the public, ought to be governed."

Dr. Langer, however, presented his authorities, which were rejected as unworthy of attention, on the ground that they were mostly French and German; and then the following resolutions were passed:

"Whereas, the first of the charges against Dr. Langer has been sustained by an unanimous vote of the society, and that hereby he stands convicted of certain unwarrantable practices; and whereas sufficient ground exists for proper punishment at the hands of this society; therefore,

"Resolved, 1st. That Dr. Ignatius Langer be and hereby is suspended.

"2d. That a special committee of three be appointed by the President, to investigate the second clause of the charges, and report to the society at the next meeting; on which report the society shall take action, with a view to his restoration or final expulsion."

The committee were in session from time to time, till the October meeting of the County Medical Society; heard testimony that was offered, not only to substantiate the specifications of the charges, (which were explicitly confined to "his being boastful," and guilty of "forcing himself into families by voluntary advice,") but upon any other charges that the zeal (not to say malice) of the accusers induced them to present. I have heard that one of the charges gravely presented was, "that he had attempted to bring discredit upon a valuable article of the *materia medica*;" in other words, that he had spoken somewhat disrespectfully of the indiscriminate administration of calomel, that sheet-anchor of some western practitioners. They, however, at last reported *adversely* to Dr. Langer's expulsion from the society.

Of course, his accusers were not satisfied with this report. They insisted upon introducing the whole testimony into the open meeting of the society, and at a late hour, when a portion of the members had retired from the meeting, they succeeded in passing a resolution of *expulsion*—eight (!) members voting in the affirmative, and one in the nega-

tive. This last was the only member of the committee of investigation that was present.

This action of the society was brought about mainly by the reading of certain letters received by one of the members of the society, from "a dozen or more professors of obstetrics, and others in different parts of the country." I am indebted to the "Defence of the Scott County Medical Society" for these facts.

They say that "these letters were in reply to the question, 'What would be your opinion of the conduct of a man who, professing to be able to detect and rectify mal positions of the fetus in utero, before labor, attempts to do so by repeated manipulations, and proclaims to his friends and the public what he is doing?'"

While this is precisely what Prof. Caseaux, and numerous others, profess to be able to do, and really attempt to do, yet it was not what Dr. L. attempted to do, for he was not called to the woman till she was taken with the pains of labor.

But that the above was not the question which elicited the letters then read to the meeting, and since published in their defence, let two of the extracts they themselves cite, show.

(From H. Miller, M. D., Prof., etc.) "As to the practice of *always examining, or desiring to examine, ladies previous to the commencement of labor, to ascertain whether or not the position of the fetus is right, I agree with you that such conduct is highly indecent and unwarrantable.*" Here it seems, that Professor Miller *agrees* with a correspondent in Iowa, that the conduct of an individual who *always* examines females *before labor* is highly indecent and unwarrantable.

(Again, from Wm. H. Byford, M. D.)—"I can hardly find words strong enough, in which to condemn the practice of *always asking to examine ladies previous to labor, to see if the child is in the right position,*" etc.

What but malice could so blind intelligent men, (as these gentlemen of the society doubtless esteem themselves to be,) that they should thus proclaim their own want of candor.

Dr. Langer requested a copy of the proceedings of this October meeting, and also of the

report of the investigating committee, but it was denied him.

Without his knowledge, the Secretary of the society prepared a circular, containing the resolution of expulsion, and also going beyond the record to make several very unfair and false insinuations in regard to the persecuted member. These clandestinely prepared circulars were sent broadcast over the country, to all the medical journals, as well as to many of the leading practitioners of medicine, that the character of the victim might be most effectually blasted. The resolution of expulsion deserves to be noticed.

Preamble and Resolution passed at the Quarterly Meeting of the S. C. M. Society, Oct. 25th, 1859.

"Whereas, at the previous meeting of the Scott County Medical Society, held July 26th, 1859, Ignatius Langer was found guilty of a charge then preferred against him, of making and repeating from day to day certain unwarrantable examinations and manipulations of a pregnant female, previous to the time of labor, with the pretended object of discovering and correcting a mal-position of the fetus in utero, and of publicly proclaiming his object and intention of his repeated visits to said patient; and whereas, said Langer, in the face of an unanimous vote of this society, condemning the practice, still persists in his avowed determination of requiring females to submit to any examination which he may think proper to make at any time during their pregnancy, which is contrary to all authority and usage, and derogatory to the dignity and decency which should ever characterize the conduct of a physician and gentleman; and whereas, certain other charges then preferred against him, which were submitted to the investigation of a special committee, have been well and fully substantiated by testimony adduced by various persons, members of this society, and others, and which charges constitute special and distinct violations of the letter and spirit of the code of ethics by which this society is governed; and whereas, during this investigation, said Langer has publicly uttered various contumelious remarks regarding the members of this society, individually, and as an association of professional men, thus exhibiting his disregard of the opinions and actions of the society, endeavoring to cast upon it the imputation of ignorance and the want of a generous spirit of tolerance; and whereas, this society deems it due to its own self-regard, and to the standing which it has ever endeavored to sustain among all honorable organizations of its kind, to protect itself against

these aspersions, to discountenance and condemn, in the most emphatic manner, the indecent and disgusting practices above mentioned; therefore, be it

"Resolved, That the said Ignatius Langer is no longer worthy of fellowship with us, having forfeited all claims thereto: that hereafter we individually and collectively, will hold no further professional intercourse with him, and that he be and is hereby formally and finally expelled from the membership of this society."

This is the resolution as given in the circular of the secretary. In the one published in the "Defence," the words "*of their persons*" are interpolated after the word "examination" in the second whereas.

If we compare this preamble and resolution with the resolutions and action of the July meeting, we shall have abundant evidence of the want of candor and fairness exhibited by this controlling faction of the society. For example, the first whereas asserts that he was found guilty at the July meeting "of publicly proclaiming the objects and intention of his repeated visits to the patient in question," while, in fact, no such charge was made against him at that meeting—much less proved. In the preparation of the first whereas, great care is taken not to include the fundamental dogma of the July charges, "that the practice is purely deceptive, an impossibility in fact, and its details highly indelicate and dishonorable."

The second whereas condemns him for defending a practice that he had adopted in good faith, and also for claiming the privilege of making an examination deemed necessary in obstetrical practice. Any physician, who had any self-respect, would claim that much. The security against abuses would lie in the fact that other females may be always present at such examinations, to say nothing of the privilege every woman has of dismissing a physician.

The third whereas insinuates a falsehood, for "the charges submitted to the investigation of a special committee" could not "have been well and fully substantiated by testimony," else why a report of that committee against his expulsion?

As to the fourth whereas, it would not be singular if a high-spirited man should "utter

"contumacious remarks" regarding members of a society behaving in such a manner.

I have only time to allude briefly to the "Defence of the Scott County Medical Society." Their comments upon the conduct of the editors of the New York *Medical Press* for judging a case after hearing only one side, ignoring the fact that the secretary of the society had been the first to publish a statement of the issue between the parties, and which had been sent everywhere three months before, hardly need an answer. The medical world is indebted to that document for the authoritative announcement that the Scott County (Iowa) Medical Society "has condemned, and still condemns, the practice of requiring females to submit to examinations of their persons, during the period of gestation, for the purpose of making attempts to correct supposed mal-positions of the foetus *previous to the commencement of labor*."

Would it not be well for them, in their next public appearance, to promulgate their views upon the use of the speculum, abdominal auscultation, and those other operations that I believe Dr. Meigs has somewhere good humoredly called "flagrancies?" These gentlemen do mention, however, that Mattei, Esterle, Noeggerath, and the Vienna professors, have taught the propriety, when in any manner a mal-position has been discovered, of making just these attempts before labor.

When, by an examination of the New York *Medical Press*, of January 28th, it is seen that Dr. Langer produced other authorities to the same intent; and also by the statement of the lady, there published, that he did not examine or manipulate her till he was sent for, on the supposition that labor had actually commenced, under circumstances when every prudent physician must have examined her, whether believing in this practice or not—then the proper weight will be given by every discriminating mind to the following extract from the "Defence of the Society," and which is a summary of their whole article:

"When the expelled member brings forward authorities in support of the practice of turning by external manipulation, after labor has commenced,

and has the characteristic mendacity to affirm that we discredit such authors, and convey the impression that he was expelled for such practice, he is manifestly endeavoring to make a false issue to obtain sympathy." . . . "We will show that the society had good cause to take action upon this question, *independently* of all others, and that we are sustained in our decision by the best living authorities of our country."

Dr. Langer did produce authorities in support of the practice of turning, by external manipulations, before labor has commenced; and this "Defence," though in one place denying it, in another cites a number of these same authorities, and attempts to controvert and deride them. That they did *then* discredit such authorities, is evident enough from the tone in which they speak of foreign authorities *now*, and their present sneer at the "vagaries of the German Illuminati."

But it is to be affirmed that there were other causes that demanded his expulsion from the society. By recurring to the proceedings of the July meeting, it will be seen, that when Dr. Langer's accusers discovered that they were likely to fail in showing cause for his expulsion, in the first series of charges, they then supplemented another, affirming that he was boastful and guilty of forcing himself into families by voluntary advice. Nothing more. That a committee was then appointed to hear testimony that might sustain these or any other charges that should be presented, upon whose report to the society action was to be taken as "*to his restoration or expulsion.*" And we also learn from the "Defence," that this committee recommended a *milder* punishment than expulsion. In the disciplinary code of the society, what is that milder punishment? Certainly not restoration, if we are to judge of the society by their conduct in this transaction.

It is also stated that, on this question, "the society is a unit in sentiment." Very possibly. But if so, they have been led into this unity by the same influences that were so potent with the chairman of the investigating committee, according to the "Defence." These were the opinions of eminent medical men, contained in letters written in reply to

the interrogatories sent them unofficially by a member of the society—replies based on a false issue—and which letters were, it seems, smuggled into the records of the society.

I have no time or disposition to follow the authors of this "Defence" further. They rely mainly upon the statement of Dr. Gregg for their facts; and this is described by them as "a graphic and truthful account of the origin of the controversy." But no candid man who reads it will hesitate to say of it, that in a question so vital as the professional and moral character of a brother practitioner, it is manifestly flippant and unreliable as *testimony*.

And it only needs to be remarked further, that, however honest and respectable a physician he may be, his statement cannot have much weight, for it is evident that he has lent himself, indiscreetly, to the service of Dr. Langer's enemies. Otherwise how should he offer the fact that the lady was seen in her kitchen as an evidence that she was not in labor? How should he affirm that one who had suffered pains for three or four days was "without a single premonition of labor?" How should he descend to caricature the opinions and conduct of a well-educated physician, who had called him in consultation, by such language as the following: "Is a man to be sustained by the profession when he asserts that he can, and did, from hour to hour, and day to day, hitch the fetus, as it were, to some imaginary hook or shelving projection in the uterus, until his leisure permits him to take another hitch, and so on; and this, too, when a woman is moving about attending to her domestic affairs?"

Of the letters quoted from eminent medical gentlemen in various parts of the country, I need only say that some of them, at least, bear intrinsic evidence that they were obtained under false pretences, and have no relation to this case of Dr. Langer. Do not these gentlemen owe it to the medical public to expose the individual who has entrapped them for such an outrageous purpose?

The remainder of the "Defence" is devoted to the abuse of Dr. Neeggerath, and foreign physicians generally. The former is abun-

dantly able to defend himself, and the latter will hardly be troubled by the opinions of the County Society in question.

In conclusion, I may say, that I have no selfish interest, and scarcely a professional one, (for I am not in general practice,) in preparing this hasty statement of what I conceive to be the true issue between the Scott County Medical Society and Dr. Langer. I have written it without consultation with him; for I felt that a prompt reply was needed to an article published in several medical journals, and which, in the hasty reading that men in active practice alone could give it, might produce false impressions. In due time, I doubt not, his own defence of himself will appear, complete and thorough. I desire only to see justice done to a gentleman of whom I have a high opinion from a personal acquaintance, and whose general professional ability even his enemies do not openly presume to disparage.

It is not his fault, certainly, that he was born on the continent of Europe; nor that he was reared and educated where the whole tone of society is so different from our own upon questions of delicacy.

Some allowance will certainly be made by all intelligent and high-minded members of the profession in this country, in the case of foreign physicians, who have come hither for the peculiar ideas they entertain, and which have been engendered and fostered by the social conditions abroad.

I feel assured that, had Dr. Gregg and the gentlemen of the Scott County Medical Society approached Dr. Langer in such a spirit, no occasion would have been furnished for the imprudent language or opinions that may have been forced out of an excited or defiant man, and the profession would have been spared this public scandal.

George the Fourth asked if the Duke of Wellington could go out that day, and Knighton said, "I ordered him not." The king said, smiling, "You ordered him *not*! Could you not have thought of a better word?" "No, sire," said Knighton; "I ordered him not. If a man does not attend to his friend and physician, he had better have neither.—*Life of Sir Astley Cooper.*

Spontaneous Reduction of Strangulated Hernia Under the Influence of Tobacco.

By E. T. BLACKWELL, M. D.,
of Stephensburg, N. J.

J. C., aged 75 years, had an inguinal hernia of long standing. It became incarcerated on the 29th of August, 1854. The size and tension of the tumor were extreme. All known methods of reduction unsuccessfully exhausted, I introduced a suppository of tobacco. In a short time, the tumor had palpably relaxed, and soon entirely yielded. On the 4th of September following, he had a relapse. By all the usual means, skillfully and perseveringly applied by two neighboring practitioners, together with the exhibition of chloroform, it proved wholly irreducible. I saw him at 4 o'clock P. M., and determined to try the remedy which had once relieved him. In about one hour from the employment of the suppository, the tension was so much lessened, that a considerable part of the protruded mass was returned by taxis; and, soon after, whilst awaiting events, the remainder of the tumor spontaneously subsided.

J. M., aged 70 years, has also had inguinal hernia from youth. Twenty years since, it became strangulated, and relief was obtained by an operation. In November last, at 7 o'clock A. M., he had a protrusion, and was unable to return it. He was at once seized with exrutiating pain in the abdomen. In his own nervous language, "the pain went right to his heart." Syncope followed, and he lay as one dead; and such his friends reported him. On my arrival, at 11 o'clock A. M., he lay motionless, and deadly pale. Consciousness had returned, but his breathing was imperceptible. His pulse was soft and regular. The tumor equaled in size the head of a new-born infant. It was tense to the last degree, and elastic. The patient was confident the operation must be repeated, and accepted that as an alternative. After trial by taxis, sufficient to prove its utter inefficiency, I applied the tobacco, and calmly awaited restoration. In about an hour, the incarcerated part was liberated; and, unassisted, swept into the cavity of the abdomen. There were no unpleasant sequelæ in either case.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

Periscope.

Florence Nightingale. Translated by O. D. PALMER, M. D., Zelienople, Pa.—The "Austrian Zeitschrift für Prac. Heilkunde" in reviewing Dr. Pittcoff's Experiences of a Civilian, speaks in the following manner of that well known charitable lady, whom all find it much more easy to oppress with praise than to imitate.

Chapter VII., (pages 69, 85.) This chapter is wholly devoted to the most deserved praise—that is, to the simple relation of a part of the numberless acts of benevolence of which Miss Florence Nightingale consecrated her energies and wealth in the Crimea. To the sick and convalescing she was a helping angel, not only in nursing and watching, but in providing them in necessities and comforts; where she did not bestow material aid, usually bestowed without the formality of draft or recognizance, she superintended in person; she wrote for them; executed dying testaments; took charge of remitting money for the sick and dying to their friends and homes; read their letters for them and wrote answers to their dictation; she treated all alike without distinction of religion or country, acting in concert with sisters of different catholic orders, with protestant deaconesses, operating at Crimea and Skutari at the same time; administering to new arrivals at the hospital often before the arrival of physicians, furnishing them, and providing for sudden emergencies from her own means. She erected a wing to the hospital, and on the day it was finished filled it with the sick and wounded, all at her own expense. On the outbreak of the typhus fever, she furnished wool and linen to the amount of from 2000 to 3000 pounds sterling. In short, she contributed toward the suppression of all feelings of nationality, at the same time contributing to the comfort of many, though to the detriment of her own health. Beside the gratitude of particular objects of her ministrations, she obtained the undivided respect of every sister of whatsoever nation or religious persuasion and order.

The Osteogenic Properties of the Periosteum.—Much has of late been done and written in Paris, especially by M. Ollier, respecting the certainty with which bone is reproduced when it is carefully removed from the periosteum using the chain saw. Cases have

been published by M. Larghi, of Verceil, M. Borelli, of Turin, and M. Ollier himself, where from three to four inches of the humerus and tibia were removed for cystic disease, with careful preservation of the periosteum, and in which the bone was reproduced. A case of tubercular affection of the ascending branch of the lower jaw is also mentioned, where M. Maisonneuve removed the bone and left the periosteum. Here again bony matter was secreted. M. Verneuil has resected the elbow-joint, and removed three inches of the humerus and one of the radius and ulna, besides the diseased articular surfaces. Sound portions and shreds of periosteum were preserved, and the result has been pretty satisfactory.

Now, all these cases are looked upon by M. Sébillot, of Strasburg, as unsatisfactory, and he is at issue with M. Ollier as to the reality of the reproduction of the bone in its integrity. The matter has been brought before the Surgical Society of Paris, and will be sifted by a committee.

M. Forget, the author of a valuable article on the subject in *L'Union Médicale*, of the 21st ult., says very justly, that the dispute arises mainly from the absolute manner in which M. Flourens, the first observer of the wonderful osteogenic properties of the periosteum, framed his opinion. Take away the bone, says M. Flourens, and the untouched periosteum will reform the bone. It were, perhaps, more just to say: take away the bone, and the preserved periosteum will yield osseous matter.

It may here be mentioned, that M. Langenbeck, of Berlin, has lately made a very ingenious application of the osteogenic powers of the periosteum, to reach the basilar process whereon was implanted a nasal polypus, by cutting through the face without giving rise to disfigurement. After having detached the os nasi and the orbital process of the superior maxilla, a portion of periosteum was saved, by which the bones remained connected with the neighboring parts. When the polypus had been removed, the whole of the resected bones, with the soft parts, were carefully replaced, and the gaping aperture effectually and appropriately closed. This case, mentioned in the *Deutsche Klinik*, No. 48, 1859, was thoroughly successful.

The Pasteboard Splints of M. Merchie, Surgeon-Major in the Belgian Army.—These splints present the peculiarity of being shaped,

beforehand, upon individuals of average size, for all parts of the body obnoxious to fracture; are fit for immediate application, even in complicated cases, and answer every expectation of the surgeon as to occlusion, compression, and coaptation. When it is considered that the prime cost is trifling, it will be conceded that a trial of these splints on a large scale is thoroughly warranted.

The inventor, who has written a large work on the subject of these splints, and who has certainly succeeded in presenting, in his book, a most elaborate critical history of the various systems of deligation in fracture, gives the most detailed description of the manner of preparing the splints, which should be sketched out upon the patterns obtained from actual shaping upon healthy individuals, and then cut out and properly moulded. The material which he found the most serviceable and cheap, is pasteboard; but any other might be employed, if found as manageable. When the fracture is reduced, the limb should be wrapped in cotton wool, which is held in its place by a bandage; the splints are then applied, and kept *in situ* by a roller or straps. In compound fracture, the many-tailed bandage is to be substituted for the roller. The author thinks that the advantages of his method may be summed up in the word "economy." There is, namely, economy of time and labor as regards the surgeon; economy of pain and uneasiness for the patient; and economy as to the cost of the splints.

We have seen a collection of these, presenting a great variety of shapes, adapted for every part of the human body; and they look extremely likely to answer the purposes held in view. When we add to this, that the author brings forward a mass of clinical facts in support of the use of the pasteboard splints, we shall have said enough to induce surgeons, especially those connected with hospitals, to give these appliances a fair trial. We shall then see whether they stand the test in compound fractures.

Hydatids of the Liver, making their way out along the Hepatic Duct into the Alimentary Canal.—A rather unusual case of hydatid disease of the liver, which ended fatally, was very recently under Dr. Barlow's care at Guy's Hospital. The patient was a man who was admitted with symptoms of hepatic disease and local peritonitis; he had had jaundice a month before his admission, which passed off. He survived but a short time; and, on mak-

ing a post mortem examination, a large hydatid cyst was discovered at the upper part of the liver, which had burst into the hepatic duct, its contents passing thence to the common bile duct and into the duodenum. Had circumstances been otherwise favorable, a recovery might have ensued, as this was an effort of nature to get rid of a visceral parasitic invasion. Dr. Wilks stated that he had met with one similar case, where the hydatid membranes passed into the alimentary canal, some of them coming away by stool, whilst others were ejected from the stomach during the act of vomiting. This termination of hepatic hydatids is by no means a common one. Sometimes they burst into the peritoneum, or into the chest. But in the human subject, although they are occasionally diagnosed during life, we have seldom any evidence to depend upon beyond symptoms of chronic hepatitis. The enlargement, however, has been known to simulate ascites, and tapping has been performed to afford relief. In Dr. Barlow's patient, the true nature of the disease was not diagnosed, because he had not been sufficiently long under observation.—*Lancet.*

Pulpy Degeneration of the Synovial Membrane of the Knee.—Opinion is much divided on the subject of the treatment of many of the affections of the knee-joint. Some surgeons advocate excision of the articulation in cases where the disease is almost confined to the joint, and does not extend much beyond, nor involve the neighboring tissues. Others again, who are opposed to excision, rely upon amputation, as the disease, whatever it may prove to be, is looked upon as incurable. Both of these methods we have frequently seen adopted. Whilst a third class would prefer to give the patient a chance of ultimate ankylosis, after many years of suffering and misery.

An example of disease confined chiefly to the synovial membrane of the right knee, in a man aged thirty-five, was submitted to amputation by the circular operation, whilst under the influence of chloroform, at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, by Mr. Stanley, on the 14th January. The case was one of a good deal of interest, because its progress had been watched from the commencement. The disease was of twelve months' duration, and for six months he had been in the hospital. Mr. Stanley considered the disease, at that time, to be a pulpy and thickened condition of the synovial membrane. When the man left the hospital, his joint was comparatively easy;

but he returned a short time back in great agony. Inflammation had occurred within the joint, and, Mr. Stanley believed, had advanced to ulceration of the cartilages. When the pulpy degeneration does not remain in a quiescent state, it is sure, he observed, to turn into ulceration of the cartilages. The joint seemed but very moderately swollen, and this was chiefly confined to its anterior part. On opening it after removal, it proved to be a well-marked example of pulpy degeneration, the thickened synovial membrane projecting into folds in the interior of the joint. The cartilages, as anticipated, were in progress of destruction on the condyles of the femur and head of the tibia. The synovial membrane was brown in color, and pulpy. The ligaments were not affected, but the bone was diseased, and its articular cartilages destroyed. It was an example of that peculiar condition of the synovial membrane which, unfortunately, cannot be relieved but by removal of the limb. The man is going on well.—*Lancet.*

Successful Treatment of Vesico-Vaginal Fistula.—Nine cases of vesico-vaginal fistula have been operated on in the Glasgow Infirmary during the last year, by Bozeman's method; and three others in private practice there. Of the twelve cases recorded, ten were completely cured by one operation, and two were unsuccessful. One of these two cases failed after repeated attempts; the other was complicated by profuse hemorrhage from the bladder.—*Lancet.*

A characteristic Sign of Typhoid Fever.—M. Sapolini describes a characteristic sign of typhoid fever, even when arriving at convalescence. It consists in a peculiar pulsation of the carotids. A large arterial wave occurs first in the artery, rapidly followed by a second less voluminous, then by a third, which is succeeded by a moment of pause. This inequality, and the sensation of interrupted *frémissement* under the fingers, are very constant and easy to verify, according to M. Sapolini.—*Lancet.*

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Man is a dupeable animal. Quacks in medicine, quacks in religion, and quacks in politics know this, and act upon that knowledge. There is scarcely any one who may not, like a trout, be taken by tickling.—*Southey.*

Reviews and Book Notices.

“Report of the Health Physician (Dr. Isaac A. Nichols,) of the City of Newark, etc., etc.

“Report on Medical Statistics, to the Newark Medical Association, January, 1860. By G. Grant, M. D.

The latter report, comprising full and analytical tables of the mortality statistics of the City of Newark, for 1859, forms the bulk of the Health Physician's Report, presented to the Board of Health. Though printed under an official garb, the document itself is not an official one. We state this, not to impeach its value, but to give credit where it belongs.

The Newark Medical Association, annually elects among its other officers, a statistician whose duty it is to prepare monthly and yearly mortuary and sanitary statistics of the city, and the present report, by Dr. Grant, shows that the society has been fortunate in the selection of that officer. It also cannot but exert a healthy influence upon the status of the profession, when the public authorities feel it in their interest to apply to voluntary medical societies for information. We are the more pleased to see this really valuable report thus published, because, when offered to the late meeting of the State Medical Society, together with other reports of the Newark Medical Association, all were *refused* on account of some technical informalities in their presentation—an unfortunate occurrence, in which however the State Society is the only loser.

A table of comparative mortuary statistics is first given:

“Estimating the population to be 77,040, the mortality will allow one death to 45.37 of the same—a rate which entitles Newark to the rank of being one of the healthiest cities of the Union. The following will exhibit Newark as compared with other cities, whose estimates of population were obtained from their respective health authorities:

	Deaths.	Population.	Proportion.
1858. Newark, N. J.	1,741	71,155	1 in 41.87
1859. Newark, N. J.	1,93	77,040	1 in 45.37
1857. New York	23,333		1 in 27
1858. Boston,	4,089	170,000	1 in 41.37
1858. Baltimore,	5,785	252,955	1 in 45.72
1859. Baltimore.	5,039	252,955	1 in 50.19
1858. Philadelphia,	10,97	600,000	1 in 56.09
1859. Philadelphia,	9,745	640,000	1 in 65.67
1858. Providence, R. I.	1,100	50,260	1 in 45.69

NOTE—These all include the still born.”

We have of late seen a number of “official” reports of various cities, the last one that of

New York, and we notice in all this, very remarkable fact, that every city is claimed "as one of the healthiest in the Union."

In computing the ratio of mortality, it is necessary to ascertain with as much precision as possible the number of inhabitants of a city; a few thousand inhabitants more or a few less, will bring the ratio of mortality up to a very favorable, or to quite an unfavorable standard. Hence follows, that too much care cannot be taken, in estimating the population of a city, where its number has not been determined by a recent census.

It is here that we believe the report before us to be inaccurate, and as Dr. Grant, with laudable candor, gives us the basis of his computation in a foot note, we are enabled to state our reasons. The foot note reads as follows:

"The calculation for this amount is as follows: Population in 1845, city census, 25,433; do. in 1855, 53,500. Increase in ten years, 28,067. Rate per cent. for ten years, 110; do. for one year, 11 per cent; do. for four years, 44 per cent. 53,500 x 44 per cent. = 77,040, population for 1859.

Add 53,500 (population of 1855) to 53,500 x 33 per cent., the rate of increase for three years, equal 71,155, the population of 1858."

It is seen that the whole estimate rests upon the supposition, that from 1855 to 1859-'60, the ratio of increase in the population was the same as during the period of 1845 to 1855.

The extraordinary increase from 1845 to 1855, by which 28,067 was added to the population, was owing, in a great measure, to the large foreign emigration during 1848 and 1852-'53; to the great industrial and manufacturing establishments, which were then built, and drew thousands of mechanics to the city. From 1849 to 1853 and 1854, the influx of German and Irish emigrants into the city could be counted by thousands, where after 1854 there were but hundreds. This much is certain, that from 1847 to 1854 the German population of Newark alone, rose from about 2,500 to at least 15,000, while since then hardly 3,000 can have been added. With the Irish emigration a similar falling off took place after 1854 or 1855.

Again, in consequence of financial revulsions, and the partial or complete stoppage of industrial establishments, occupying large numbers of mechanics, many of the latter have emigrated to the Western States with their families, since 1855. Thus we have not only the absence of the unusually numerous influx of emigration up to 1853 and 1854, which should render the

ratio of increase less in the period after 1855, but also an *eflux* which is by no means inconsiderable.

Hence we believe that the basis of Dr. Grant's computation, the ratio of increase during 1853 and 1854, is an unsafe, at least a very uncertain one, and though none would be more glad of a disappointment, yet we firmly believe that the present population of Newark is less than 70,000, and not much more than 65,000. However, this question will soon be settled by the next census.

Table II, and table XVIII, (for the report comprises eighteen distinct tables, and extends over twenty-six pages,) are the most interesting, being really statistical gems. In the former we have the comparative statistics of the cities of Newark, Boston, Providence, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York. In reference to age, not only the aggregate is given, but also the per centage, and at a glance we can find the per centage of deaths at a particular age in these various cities.

This is exceedingly valuable in the study of infant mortality.

Taking the per centage of infantile mortality under one year of age, in the cities enumerated above, for the year 1858, (still-born included,) we find that in the whole number of deaths it is as follows:

New York,	-	-	-	36.34
Newark,	-	-	-	35.95
Philadelphia,	-	-	-	30.90
Baltimore,	-	-	-	30.75
Boston,	-	-	-	30.15
Providence,	-	-	-	28.71

This looks anything but favorable to Newark, placing it alongside New York and falling short of Providence 7.24 per cent. But lest we should do injustice to Newark, let us compare the ratio of infantile mortality up to the fifth year. The figures run as follows:

New York,	-	-	-	60.00
Newark,	-	-	-	55.77
Baltimore,	-	-	-	51.08
Philadelphia,	-	-	-	49.25
Boston,	-	-	-	45.41
Providence,	-	-	-	45.33

Here again, Newark holds the same neighborly position to New York, which it does geographically, and falls short of Providence not less than 10.44 per cent.

But to make perfectly sure, we will take the comparative ratio of deaths, of all persons up to adult life, or 20 years. It is as follows:

New York, - - -	65.86
Newark, - - -	64.61
Baltimore, - - -	62.11
Philadelphia, - - -	55.67
Providence, - - -	55.82
Boston, - - -	53.82

Here Newark approaches the City of New York nearer than ever, and Boston gets the better of her by 10.79 per cent.

The fact can hardly be denied, that the *ratio of infant mortality*, in the absence of any definite and accurate census, forms the best, perhaps, and the safest mortiometer and the best criterion of the sanitary condition of a city. The great mortality of Newark arises from her *infant mortality*, and we believe that the experience of all statisticians tends to show that that community which shows the largest per centage of infant mortality, shows also the largest ratio of deaths to the population, and hence we claim that the facts apparent from the figures of table II, tend to prove, if the objections which we have already raised should not, that Dr. Grant's basis of estimating the population of Newark is too favorable, and that, far from being one of the healthiest cities of the Union, it really ranks nearer than any one of the cities mentioned to New York, that prototype of unsanitary misgovernment.

We are still further strengthened in this view, when we glance at the comparative mortality per centage in these six cities, taking the period of life *after 60 years*. It is obvious that the larger the per centage of deaths at an advanced period of life, the more favorable must be the ratio of mortality to the population, and the better also, the sanitary condition of the community.

Thus we find that out of the whole number of deaths, there were of persons, who had arrived at and passed 60 years in

New York, - - -	6.37
Newark, - - -	7.24
Baltimore, - - -	9.94
Boston, - - -	10.53
Philadelphia, - - -	12.19
Providence, - - -	14.05

That is to say, while in Providence, out of 100 persons who died in 1858, 14.05 per cent. had arrived at 60 years or over, in New York only 6.37 had been so fortunate, in Newark only 7.24, once more placing the latter next to New York in its mortality.

Table XVIII furnishes us with comparative statistics of the diseases, alphabetically arranged, of these six cities; here the per centage is also given, and we are enabled at a glance to

find the relative per centage of deaths from any particular disease, as well as the aggregate.

Under table V to XV, we have a nosological classification of the diseases of Newark for 1859 given, which is excellent; we have noticed, however, a few inaccuracies. "Nervous Fever," (i. e. typhus or typhoid,) is classified under "diseases of the brain and nervous system," whereas it should be under "zymotic diseases" "Angina pectoris" is enumerated under diseases of the respiratory system, while its proper place would be under those of the circulatory system; "bilious fever" is mentioned with the diseases of the digestive system; we should have placed it with the other miasmatic fevers under "zymotic," These however are unimportant inaccuracies.

The report is not only creditable to Dr. Grant, whose labors, as every table shows, must have been most assiduous, but also to the Society under whose authority it was made. "If through medical statistics lies the most secure path into the philosophy of medicine," as the author quotes from Holland, then medical societies can do no better, than to follow the example of the Newark Medical Association, and make the presentation of statistics a regular order of business, and the "statistician" a regular officer.

We have stated the reasons why we differ from Dr. Grant in his estimate of the population of Newark, and attempted to prove the correctness of our views by the simple testimony of the tables themselves. Certainly all will admit that of all things statistics deserve the severest criticism, and nothing is more fatal to true sanitary reform than conclusions as to the favorable sanitary condition of a city, based upon an exaggerated estimate of population.

Such deductions, based upon hypothetical premises are but too readily adopted by those opposed to sanitary reform, and those interested in it should avoid every statement, flattering to the sanitary condition of a city, unless it can be demonstrated with mathematical certainty.

CH. F. J. L.

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A correspondent of the London *Times*, states that in the Commune d'Ecilly, in France, two men were buried alive in a well by a fall of loose earth, and that after twenty days one of them was taken out still alive; having survived the want of fresh air, light and food, throughout that long period, in addition to the impossibility of moving and the presence by his side of the dead body of his unfortunate companion, for a considerable portion of the time.

THE MEDICAL AND SURGICAL REPORTER.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 1860.

SKETCHES OF EMINENT PHYSICIANS.

Under the heading of the "Gold-Headed Cane" we find two pleasant articles in late numbers of our contemporary, the *North American Medico-Chirurgical Review*. They are chiefly made up from a small volume of imaginary autobiography, in which the gold-headed cane retails conversations and incidents in the professional life of some of the distinguished London physicians of the last and the early part of the present century, who, in succession, were its bearers, viz: Drs. Radcliffe, Mead, Askew, Pitcairn, and Baillie. The first two are those described in the Review. Availing ourselves of the reminiscences which we find recorded in other works, we also would say something of these eminent men.

Dr. Radcliffe was the most eccentric, and at the same time the most successful, physician of his day. Although he went through the University of Oxford in the customary forms, his contemporaries gave him little credit for learning. When a friend, on a visit to his chambers, asked Radcliffe where his study was, the latter replied, pointing to a few vials and a skeleton, "Sir, this is Radcliffe's library." Although abrupt and rough in manner, his company was relished for his pleasantry and wit. He was a man of great decision, and gave his prognosis in a tone of confidence. Having prophesied, with great accuracy, the fate of the Duke of Beaufort, he was always referred to, as an oracle, to decide disputed points of practice. He was a physician to King William III., who suffered from dropsy of the chest, accompanied by swelling of his ankles. "What think you of these?" asked the royal patient. "Why, truly," replied his blunt medical attendant, "I would not have your majesty's two legs for your three kingdoms."

Radcliffe's success was due to his good sense, his practical knowledge, his decision in danger, and his ready expedients. His exuberant wit often got him into trouble. Dr. Marshall prosecuted him for a witticism; and

he excited Swift's spleen, who was pleased to call him "that puppy Radcliffe." Sometimes he met with a retort when he might least have expected it, as in his encounter of wits with the eminent painter Sir Godfrey Kneller. They were neighbors to each other, and on such terms of intimacy that the gardens of their houses communicated by a door in the party wall. Unfortunately, however, Sir Godfrey, who possessed a choice collection of plants and flowers, had occasion to complain of the damage done to them by the doctor's servants. The evil continuing, the painter at last sent word to Radcliffe that he should be obliged to close up the door. To this the doctor returned for answer, that "Sir Godfrey might do even what he pleased with the door, so that he did not paint it." When the footman, after some hesitation, delivered this message, Sir Godfrey said: "Did my good friend, Dr. Radcliffe, say so? Go back to him, and, after presenting my service to him, tell him that I can take any thing from him but his physic."

Radcliffe died a bachelor. Twice he was a wooer; in the first instance, with such success as to be affianced to the lady. But, before the time for the espousal, he made the unpleasant discovery that his betrothed was, or ought to be, another man's wife already, and, of course, the engagement was broken off. In the second affair, he offered himself, when well advanced in life, to a lady of great beauty, wealth, and quality, whom he had cured of a serious malady. Her gratitude did not, however, go so far as to induce her to lend a favorable ear to the doctor's suit; nor was her delicacy equal to her keeping the secret of his rejection. He was ridiculed, on the occasion, by Steele in the Tatler, under the title of "The mourning Aesculapius—the languishing, hopeless lover of the divine Hebe, emblem of youth and beauty."

Among many singular incidents related of this eccentric man, is the following: It was the custom then for physicians to meet together at coffee-houses and discuss, in the evening, the state of their patients, and not seldom other matters of less moment. Whilst Radcliffe was thus engaged one evening, he

was called on by a grenadier, who desired his immediate attendance on his colonel ; but no entreaties could prevail on the now devotee of Bacchus to resume his duty to *Æsculapius*. "Sir," quoth the soldier, "my orders were to bring you," and, being a very powerful man, he took him up in his arms and carried him off by force. After traversing some dirty lanes, the doctor and his escort arrived at a narrow alley. "What the d—l is all this?" said Radcliffe ; "your colonel don't live here?" "No," said his military friend, "but my comrade does, and he's worth two colonels ; so, if you don't do your *best* for *him*, it will be the *worst* for *you*."

Although Radcliffe practiced medicine, he had as great a contempt for physic as he had for physicians, giving it as his opinion that the whole art might be written on a piece of paper. His professional rivals were not backward in their retorts, by speaking of him as an active, ingenuous, and adventurous empiric, whom constant practice brought at last to some skill in his profession. We shall, however, seldom find a more instructive lesson than that given in his acknowledgment, that, when a young practitioner, he possessed twenty remedies for every disease, and, before the end of his career, he found twenty diseases for which he had not a remedy.

Of his practical philosophy, we read a good example in his remark, after hearing of the loss of five thousand pounds sterling (\$25,000) in a venture to the East Indies. "I have no more to do than to go up so many more pair of stairs to make myself whole again." Towards the close of his life, Radcliffe expressed his sorrow at the time given to revelry and sensual enjoyments. He was a member of parliament for the town of Buckingham. He never wrote any thing, and was so little versed in literature that Garth used humorously to say, "For Radcliffe to leave a library, was as if a eunuch should found a seraglio."

If he did not leave a library, he made a most munificent bequest of a sum equal to \$200,000 for the building of one, to be attached to the University of Oxford, and \$600 *per annum* for a librarian, and \$500 yearly

for the purchase of books. He founded, in addition, two traveling fellowships. He also left \$2,500 yearly forever towards mending the diet of St. Bartholomew's Hospital. After the payment of the several bequests specified, and legacies to various individuals, he gave to his executors in trust all his estates in four counties, to be applied to such charitable purposes as they, in their discretion, should think proper. Among the results of this last bequest, was the erection of the Observatory and the Public Infirmary at Oxford.

"Radcliffe's eulogy may be written in a few lines. The figures in it are not those of rhetoric nor of poetry ; but they carry with them a fullness of thought, a far sightedness, a force, and an animation more convincing and more enduring than the finest prize poem or oration. They have elevated science, expanded literature, imparted new hopes to the desponding, raised the sick and the infirm from the bed of suffering, and snatched many from the grasp of death itself. Radcliffe wrought all these wonders by his last will and testament." There are those among us who have the power of renewing, in the present generation, these wonders of a former one. Will they do so ?

THE SCOTT COUNTY (IOWA) MEDICAL SOCIETY AND DR. LANGER.

The *REPORTER*, of February 25th, contained a communication from the Scott County (Iowa) Medical Society, defending it against imputations cast upon its action in expelling Dr. Ignatius Langer for alleged unprofessional conduct. These imputations were cast by the defendant in a communication to the *New York Medical Press*.

While, in our view, the judicial decisions of a society should command the greatest respect, particularly when, as in this case, there appears to be a remarkable degree of unanimity among the members, the accused are justly entitled to a respectful hearing. Dr. Langer's defence comes to us from an unexpected source, and appears to show that his standing has been good with men of high position in the profession.

Our readers, having the statements of both sides before them, must judge between the parties. If Dr. Langer thinks that he has

been dealt with unjustly by the County Society, his proper course is to appeal to the State Society, and defend his position there. Aside from the question involved, of the proper time for performing version of the foetus by external manipulations, the matter is unsuited to a discussion in the journals.

MEDICAL COMMENCEMENTS.

The commencement of the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania was held too late in the week for notice in our last number. It took place on the 15th inst. For the following report of the interesting proceedings, in connection with the commencement exercises, we are indebted to the *Press* of this city :

Prior to the commencement exercises, the graduates, professors, trustees, &c., gathered in the rotunda of the University building, to take part in the ceremony of presenting to the board of trustees the portrait of George B. Wood, M. D., LL. D., professor of medicine and clinical medicine, on the occasion of his retirement from the chair he had so long occupied. Dr. J. Campbell Shorb, of Maryland, made the presentation speech. After referring to the retirement of Professor Wood, and the regret of the class at hearing of his intention to leave the chair he had occupied so long, he said : "It was under the promptings of this feeling that a meeting was called in the University on the evening of the 29th of November. A preamble was read expressive of the deep regret of the class at the departure of Dr. Wood, of our lasting gratitude to him, and of our desire that, as a 'parting legacy,' he would allow us to have his portrait painted, and placed in the Wistar and Horner Museum. Resolutions were read, and adopted, appointing a committee to convey to Dr. Wood the wishes of the class. In a kind and grateful letter, he granted our request; the painting was immediately commenced, and finished some four or five weeks since."

After alluding to the professional eminence of Dr. Wood, and the services he had rendered to the cause of medicine, the speaker concluded his remarks by saying: "And now, in behalf of the medical class of 1860, I present to you the portrait of Dr. George B. Wood, and request that it be placed in the Wistar and Horner Museum, in remembrance of him whose name posterity will not willingly let die;

whose genius the University will ever love to recollect; whose career has been but a long series of brilliant successes; whose life is a model; whose example is, in every respect, most instructive; and lastly, as a token of our deep and life-long gratitude."

Dr. R. La Roche received the picture, as the representative of the Board of Trustees. He expressed the gratitude of the board for the testimonial given them. Dr. La Roche spoke at length concerning the private worth and great professional skill of the original of the portrait, and of the difficulty that would be experienced in filling the chair vacated by him. He concluded thus: "In closing this brief, and, I fear, imperfect reply to the considerate and feeling address with which we have favored, I must be permitted to congratulate you all, gentlemen, for the high character of the class during the last session. In like manner must I congratulate those among you who are this day to receive the honors of the doctorate, for the distinguished manner in which they have passed the ordeal of their examinations. I but repeat what has been reported to me by your preceptors, when I say, with the view that the fact may be widely spread, that seldom has this school had occasion to boast of so intelligent and attentive a class, and of a set of graduates so well calculated to do full credit to their Alma Mater."

Professor Wood spoke with much feeling after Dr. La Roche had concluded. He expressed his warm gratitude for the compliment paid him by the class, and for the kind remarks relative to himself, made by the gentleman who had preceded him.

After the ceremony of presenting the portrait was concluded, the graduates formed in procession, and, preceded by the professors and officers of the University, they proceeded to Musical Fund Hall, where they were greeted by a full audience, of which a very large portion was composed of ladies. After the performance of appropriate music, prayer was offered by Rev. Albert Barnes. John F. Frazer, LL. D., Vice Provost of the institution, then conferred the degree of Doctor of Medicine upon *one hundred and sixty-nine* graduates.

The Valedictory Address was delivered to the graduates by Dr. Joseph Carson, Professor of *Materia Medica and Pharmacy*.

COLLEGE OF PHARMACY.—The annual commencement of this institution was held on Thursday evening the 15th inst. Charles

Ellis, the President of the College, conferred the degree of graduate of Pharmacy upon *twenty-nine* candidates.

The Valedictory Address was delivered by Prof. Robert P. Thomas, M. D., and was an eloquent, learned, and entertaining discourse.

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NASHVILLE.—At the last annual commencement the degree of M. D. was conferred by the President, the venerable Dr. Felix Robertson, on *one hundred and one* candidates. Dr. B. W. Avent, of Murfreesboro', delivered the Valedictory Address to the graduates, and Dr. W. H. H. Williams, of Mississippi, was the valedictorian of the class.

MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL COLLEGE.—The commencement took place on the 7th inst. President Felton (of Harvard College) conferred the degree of Doctor of Medicine on *thirty-two* candidates. Dr. E. H. Clarke delivered the Valedictory.

KENTUCKY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE.—At the commencement on the 7th inst. *thirty-eight* candidates received the degree.

INCREASING INTEREST IN QUARANTINE INVESTIGATIONS.

The subject of quarantine regulations, since the effective attention given to the subject in this country, is attracting a deserved interest in Great Britain. The London *Lancet* is now urging professional and public attention to everything relating to quarantine in all its varied relations; to discover, as far as possible, the results of the system hitherto pursued, and then to consider fairly and temperately, what reforms the welfare of the general health, as well as the interests of commerce and public convenience justly call for. That journal makes the following remarks on the subject:

On no one could the task be more fitly devolved, and by none, probably, could it be undertaken with greater prospect of successful issue, than by the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, ranking as it does amongst its members men of all grades in society, as well as of all shades of opinion, political and scientific, and which has succeeded in commanding the active sympathy and support of some of the most influential statesmen of the day. The profession is aware

what steps have been taken to carry into effect the resolution of the Association, adopted at their meeting in Liverpool, in the autumn of 1858, and what a large amount of information has already been obtained, chiefly through British consuls residing in foreign ports, and the governors of our scattered colonies, as well as from the Medical Departments of the army and navy. We await the results of the analysis of this evidence with no small degree of interest, as it cannot fail to be highly instructive in the detail of facts, and the record of wide-spread experience, derived from authentic sources, whatever may be the eventual conclusions of the committee on the difficult questions of quarantine legislation and practice.

Meanwhile, the extravagant proceedings in some of the continental ports, more particularly in Lisbon, to which we drew attention in a recent number of *The Lancet*—when the Board of Health there, by a stroke of the pen, declared the entire coast of Brazil, between 2,000 and 3,000 miles in extent, to be infected with yellow fever, merely because the disease was known, or believed to exist in one or two ports of that kingdom—serve to keep the subject prominently before the public; and all the more as no city in Europe has of late years so severely and fatally suffered from the very epidemics against which quarantine is peculiarly and specially directed as Lisbon—from cholera in 1855 and 1856, and from yellow fever in 1856 and 1857—notwithstanding the extraordinary vigilance and stringent rigor of their precautionary regulations upon all arrivals from foreign places.

But it is not in this country alone that the subject is exciting unusual interest amongst the medical profession and others at the present time. Our brethren across the Atlantic have had the start of us; for it is now more than three years ago that a Convention of Medical Delegates from the different States of the Union was held in Philadelphia, to consider the working and results of quarantine in their country, in the hope of rectifying its many acknowledged abuses and irregularities, and of establishing, if possible, a uniform and rational system in all their great commercial ports. Two annual meetings have been held since, at Charleston in 1858, and last year at New York. The proceedings in the latter city created a lively sympathy, not only amongst medical men, but amongst many of the leading merchants, shipowners, and others interested

in the prosperity of commerce and international communication, and who are, therefore, desirous of removing all unnecessary or extravagant burdens and restrictions upon freedom of transit between different countries.

News and Miscellany.

The Prohibition of Tobacco in the Philadelphia County Prison.—The resolution of the Board of Inspectors of the Philadelphia County Prison, prohibiting the habitual use of tobacco by the prisoners, adopted nearly a year ago, has been found satisfactory and beneficial in its influence. The precedent is worthy the attention of all institutions of a penal or reformatory character throughout the country. The report of Dr. Henry Yale Smith, physician to the prison, says on the subject, that, if "nothing else has been gained by its prohibition, we have the satisfaction to know that the prisoner's cell, including window, walls, floor, etc., is no longer besmeared with a flood of tobacco juice, as though it was for no other purpose than a spit-box. We are happy to say, that although at first many of the prisoners exhibited much opposition to the rule, and for some time refused to work, yet very soon they became accustomed to the privation, and now, as a general thing, they express themselves satisfied with the regulation."

In his Annual Report to the Board of Governors as to the condition of the New York almshouse department, Dr. Sanger says:

"I again report to your Honorable Board that the almshouse buildings are fearfully overcrowded, and badly ventilated. My annual reports during the past six years will bear witness that I have performed my duty in calling your attention to the dangerous condition of this institution."

Dr. Woodward's Course on Physiology, which will soon commence, will be of a very attractive and practical character. The lecturer is one of the most industrious physiologists in this country, and his experience will make his illustrations by vivi-sections, and other physiological experiments, the most impressive method of teaching the subject.

The Medical Association of Australia have adopted the Code of Ethics of the American Medical Association.

Human Endurance—During the Arctic voyages in search of Sir John Franklin, it was ascertained what a seaman can do in the way of traveling, carrying, and dragging. The maximum weight proper per man was ascertained to be 220 lbs, and of that weight 3 lbs. per diem was consumed by each man for food and fuel—namely, 1 lb. of bread, and 1 lb. of meat, while the other pound comprised his spirits, tea, cocoa, sugar, tobacco, and fuel for cooking. Upon this estimate it was found that, for a hundred days' journey, they could march ten miles per diem, and endure with impunity a temperature of 50° or 60° below the freezing point.—*Scientific American*.

Florence Nightingale's health which, it is said, has been for some time failing, continues to decline.

Acupressure.—Simpson's new method of hemostasis is now being experimentally tested in the principal hospitals of England. Some favorable reports of its use in large amputations, are reported.

Consequences of Cystitis.—A surgeon afflicted with cystitis, traveling by train from Gloucester, ran to the further end of the platform, and relieved the bladder near a paling, but in sight, it appeared, of one of the last carriages. The husband of a lady in the carriage caused him to be arrested on a charge of indecency; he was acquitted after detention in jail for three days, being remanded through the non-appearance of the prosecutor. He has since brought an action in the Queen's Bench against his prosecutor for damages for false imprisonment, and obtained a verdict for £100.—*Lancet*.

Tribute to the Memory of Dr. Todd.—The staff of King's College Hospital and the private friends of the late Dr. Todd, have resolved to perpetuate his memory by a statue to be erected in the hospital. It was also determined that a Todd clinical gold medal be founded as a prize.

One of the large anacondas in Barnum's American Museum has recently been delivered of a litter of young. Snakes are ova-viviporous, the eggs are formed and hatched within the body of the animal. This, probably, has given rise to the popular notion that these reptiles swallow their offspring.

Small Pox—Gas as a disinfectant.—In St. Johns, New Brunswick, there are many cases of small-pox under treatment, but there is no house in the city where gas is burned, of the ordinary consumption, in which the disease has as yet found lodgment. The gas, it is supposed, is a powerful disinfectant, and hence there is no contagion within the circle of its influence. It is stated that a person burning gas may contract the disease abroad and take it home with him, but it will not be communicated to any other member of his family."

We copy the above paragraph, which is going the rounds of the papers, for the purpose of disputing the inference that gas will protect people from the small-pox. There is a person in our office who contracted this disease in a room where gas was burned very freely; the disease is also very prevalent in the city of Glasgow, where gas is very largely consumed. Small-pox is doubtless uncommon among that class of people who burn gas in our cities, because they generally have sufficient intelligence and forethought to attend to the vaccination of their families, and its ravages are almost wholly confined to that improvident class who make no provision against the small-pox, or anything else in the future, and who live by the light of burning fluid.—*Scientific American.*

Celibacy in Relation to Mortality.—The mortality of persons in a state of celibacy is greater in France in women than in men below 20. Above that age, the reverse prevails; probably, in some measure, on account of military service. The difference between the mortality of single and married persons, both men and women, is in favor of the former below 20, and from 20 to 25 years. But above that age it is more favorable to the married. In 1851 the population of France exceeded 36 millions, of which number 13,935,846 individuals were married, 8,564,049 (viz. 4,014,105 men, and 4,549,944 women) were single, and 2,524,092 (836,509 men, and 1,687,583 women), were in a state of widowhood.—*Medical Times and Gaz.*

To Correspondents.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.—*Delaware*—Dr. J. H. Simms, *Georgia*—Mr. W. A. Miller, *Illinois*—Dr. F. N. Smith, *Iowa*—Dr. J. M. Adler, *Kentucky*—Dr. T. H. Hammond, *Louisiana*—Dr. A. J. Sourkes, *Maryland*—Dr. L. R. Kirk, *New Jersey*—Dr. O. S. Belden, Dr. A. W. Rogers, (with encl.) Dr. Jos. B. Goodnough, (with encl.) Dr. T. T. Price, (with encl.) *New York*—Dr. T. W. Blatchford, Bailliere Bros., Dr. Ch. F. J. Leibbach, Dr. A. C. Campbell, (with encl.) Dr. James Brown, E. Queru, Dr. John McCall, (with encl.) *Ohio*—Dr. A. H. Stephens, Dr. S. Lovring, (with encl.) Dr. W. R. Gilkey, (with encl.) *Pennsylvania*—Dr.

H. A. Grim, (with encl.) Dr. J. G. Schwenk, (with encl.) Dr. J. B. Stubbs, Dr. J. R. Walker, Dr. D. A. Arter, Dr. J. R. Ludlow, (with encl.) Dr. F. McGrath, Dr. O. D. Palmer, Drs. Sheridan and Marbourg, (with encl.) Dr. Levergood, Dr. D. G. Schoner, Dr. Ferd. H. Gross, (with encl.)—*Rhode Island*—Dr. E. M. Snow, *Vermont*—Dr. S. W. Thayer, (with encl.) *Wisconsin*—Dr. S. K. Faulkner, (with encl.)

Office Payments.—Dr. N. M. Edwards, (of Ky.) B. C. Everett, (adv.) Dr. Augustus Arnold, Dr. S. C. Hinckle, Dr. Dan'l R. Gardiner, Dr. R. Gardiner, Dr. John Craig, (of N. Y.) Dr. Thomas Moore, Dr. E. P. B. Kelly.

—O— MARRIAGES.

DUTCHER—CROCHERON.—In New York, on Monday, March 19, by Rev. J. E. Scarles, Dr. B. C. Dutcher, of Brooklyn, to Miss L. R. Crocheron, of Staten Island.

BANKS—McDOUGAL.—At Freeport, L. I., on the 14th inst., by Rev. James McDugal, George B. Banks, M. D., and Sarah G., only daughter of the officiating clergyman.

HARRY—WOLLASTON.—At the La Pierre House, Philadelphia, on the 7th of February, by Rev. H. Darling, Mr. Chas. H. Wollaston, and Miss A. Victoria, daughter of Samuel H. Harry, M. D., all of Chester county, Pa.

WHITE—REED.—In New York, on Wednesday evening, March 7, by Rev. Dr. Lord, Whitman V. White, M. D., of Stockbridge, Mass., to Maria Louise, daughter of J. M. Reed, Esq., of that city.

DEATHS.

MCCLENNAN.—In this city, suddenly, by apoplexy, on the 21st inst., Dr. Morris McClellan, aged 62 years. Dr. McClellan has been known for some years as a dealer in surgical bandages, spinal apparatus, etc.

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Philadelphia, March, 1860.

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